

Talking Points

Improving Communications, E-Skills & Developing the Knowledge Economy in Tanzania: An ICT perspective

by

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**Hon. Ministers and Deputy/Vice Ministers,
MD & Officials of AfricanBrains
PS, DPS, DGs of Ministries & Departments
Distinguished Officials & Leaders of Industry
Ladies & Gentlemen**

**Salutations from my Minister, Hon. Prof. Makame Mbarawa & Deputy Minister,
Hon. January Makamba of the Ministry of Communication, Science & Technology**

**Thank the Government of South Africa, Government of Western Cape, UWC and
AfricanBrains for being wonderful hosts, and wonderful organisation**

**Our Deputy Minister for Education & Vocational Training, Hon. Mulugo, has
already highlighted some facts about Tanzania and the Education sector**

Introduction

-  The mission of the Ministry of Communication, Science and Technology (MCST) is to facilitate sustainable wealth creation and better livelihood of Tanzanians through policy development and promotion of Science, Information Communication Technology, Innovation, Research & Development, for the realisation of Tanzania's Vision 2025.
-  The Tanzania Commission of Science and Technology (COSTECH) is a national body established by the Act of Parliament No 7 of 1986. COSTECH is the principal advisory organ (Chief Advisor) to the Government on all matters pertaining to Science, Technology, Innovation, ICT Entrepreneurship and R&D, and their application for socio-economic development of the country in realizing Tanzania's development Vision 2025.

- ✚ The Ministry of Communication, Science & Technology, is on a path of developing a technology-supported society that can be increasingly self-reliant, socially cohesive and equitable, involving fundamentally new ways of thinking, working and living.
- ✚ It requires the building of new capacities, not only in the working force but the entire population. We consider these capacities to be inevitably associated with the use of ICT and referred to as *e-skills*
- ✚ Tanzania's implementation strategy is guided by her Vision 2025 and Mkukuta II

Tanzania Vision 2025

- ✚ The Vision projects that by year 2025 the Tanzanian society will be free from poverty, will have graduated from the group of least developed countries to that of middle income countries with a high level of human development.
- ✚ On 17th May 2010, speaking at the official launch of the Benjamin William Mkapa Special Economic Zone (BWM-SEZ) in Dar es Salaam, H.E. President Jakaya Kikwete reiterated the government's commitment to turning Tanzania into an industrialised nation come 2025.
- ✚ The vision has the following five major attributes:
 - High quality livelihood;
 - peace, stability and unity;
 - good governance;
 - a well educated and learning society; and
 - a competitive economy capable of producing sustainable growth and shared benefits.

Mkukuta II

- ✚ MKUKUTA II (Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kupunguza Umaskini Tanzania wa Pili), or the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty II (NSGRP II), is the current national organizing framework which accords high priority to poverty reduction in Tanzania's development agenda.
- ✚ MKUKUTA II is to be implemented for five years (2010/11 – 2014/15). It is informed by the aspirations of Vision 2025 and the quest to achieve its 5 attributes mentioned earlier and also the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The Policies advancing e-Skills Development for a Knowledge Economy in Tanzania

- ✚ The Ministry of Communication, Science & Technology is playing its role in this vision and laying out a coordinated strategic plan for e-Skills through an ICT and STI Policy that will deliver Tanzania's vision 2025. Based on the above mentioned principles, the old policies are now being reviewed and framed to play a role in the attainment of MKUKUTA II attributes and Vision 2025 goals.
- ✚ The ICT policy is being revised and it now has 8 key pillars:
 - 1) Human Capital and Leadership
 - 2) Universal Broadband Access and Infrastructure
 - 3) ICT Industry and SME development
 - 4) E-services and Local Content Development
 - 5) ICT Safety, Security and Standards
 - 6) Legal, Regulatory & Institutional framework
 - 7) Regional and International Cooperation
 - 8) Productive Sectors
- ✚ The Science, Technology & Innovation policy is also being revised, to reflect issues of entrepreneurship, technology transfer and the commercialisation of proven "bankable results", and the use of R&D for developmental economic activities.
- ✚ Tanzania believes that, e-Skills capacity building for the workforce and entire population with the use of ICTs is important for the growth in equitable prosperity and a globally competitive economy.
- ✚ The Ministry (MCST) is in the process of integrating e-Skills capacity building and its utilisation in the above mentioned pillars to help achieve our vision and have economic development and global competitiveness.

Open Government & e-Skills

- ✚ Our President, H.E. Dr. Jakaya Kikwete participated in the Open Government Partnership in Brasilia in April, 2012, whereby, Tanzania committed to and is in the process of building an Open Government/Data Platform that will enhance this notion of having an involved "knowledge citizenry" as part of the knowledge society.

- ✚ Tanzania believes that, the importance of e-skills is seen in its essentiality to empower individuals so that they can participate fully as citizens of a Knowledge Society and take advantage of all the opportunities before them: for employment and wealth creation, taking advantage of innovative education and learning strategies, and using new life-enhancing services, such as interaction with public authorities in areas such as maternal health, education, judiciary and providing feedback for good governance.
- ✚ In this phase, emphasis has been put on Education, Health, Sanitation & Water. The Ministry through COSTECH, with partners and stakeholders, is implementing Open Government/Data Platform in a two prong approach, the first in formulating the policy and framework and the second developing a portal for Open Data that will allow for the advancement of creating a knowledgeable society and provide feedback for better governance.
- ✚ Along those lines, for example, we are about to have an Open Data Platform workshop/boot camp bringing together media entities and application developers (both mobile & web) to interact and get the skills to work in a digital environment and create analytical visualized reporting that has a positive impact on the community and helps development activities.

Strategies for e-Skills & Developing Communication

- ✚ Implicit in our strategies, it is essential for citizens, at all levels of our society, to have access to related learning and tools - enabling them to participate in their communities and nation at large, not to mention the global society.
- ✚ Communication plays a crucial role, as these e-skills require the ability to develop and use ICT to adequately participate in an environment increasingly dominated by access to electronically enabled information and a well-developed ability to synthesize this into effective and relevant knowledge.
- ✚ Tanzania's deployment of her National ICT Backbone for the access of the Internet and other information and communication technologies (ICT) represents the material foundation for a networked community and the push to be one of the emerging new economies in the region, thus fulfilling her Vision 2025 of being a knowledgeable economy.
- ✚ Capacity building is on-going in mobile/web applications that are community problem solvers through co-creation activities and the use of ICT Incubation, Innovations spaces and communities around the country that are "living labs".

- ✚ We work with other Ministries, Stakeholders and Partners, especially the Ministry of Education & Vocational Training. For example, the National Schools Connectivity Plan (“NSCP” or “the Plan”) considers the various policies and regulations to connect Tanzanian schools & Teacher’s colleges to national broadband back-bone and internet by 2015. What needs to be addressed in the plan (and it is being rectified) is to the inclusion of tertiary institutions and Adult and Non-Formal Education Centres. But then, all HLIs are connected a special fibre back-bone for academic research.
- ✚ Implementation of Start/Smart Skills programme which will support the growth of our Business Processing & Outsourcing at Rhapsa City (our Technology Park). It looks to put in place an innovation process with entrepreneurship, while linking to the “Living Lab” concept in the communities. We currently have about 8 of them, with a central node we call the Innovation Space at COSTECH. This is expected to filter down to our Micro Work Programme that will build skills across sectors in a “bottom-up” approach.
- ✚ A greater push by the Commission for Science & Technology is to use R&D to inform the policy formulation processes in creating a knowledgeable economy. For example, we are looking at the extractive industries and the impact they have on their communities in providing new skills, in addition to finding value addition to the extraction process.
- ✚ We have created and are continuing to create Telecentres in the rural areas. We have set up Centres of Excellence of Higher Learning to build skills, like the Nelson Mandela African Institute of sciences and Technology, and the collaborative programme South Africa and Tanzania on the High Performance Super Computing.

What does Tanzania want to achieve?

- ✚ ***Employment readiness***: aimed at the improvement of employment figures for graduates from tertiary institutions and shortened time from employment to productivity.
- ✚ ***Effective e-governance and service delivery***: aimed at the effective use of ICT for service delivery that is developmental, agile, competent, and citizen-centric. This will result in the government having better communication with the citizenry.

✚ **Business development:** aimed at providing skills needed within our Small and Medium Enterprises to:

- (i) exploit opportunities provided by ICT, notably the Internet and emerging mobile phone technologies,
- (ii) ensure more efficient and effective performance,
- (iii) explore possibilities for new ways of conducting business and organizational processes, and
- (iv) establish new businesses, including moving the informal sector to becoming part of the formal sector.

✚ **Research and Development:** aimed at informing policy and curriculum development, defining applications and evaluating progress. We hope the research and results will be collaboratively useful across various government ministries and their agencies, private sector, NGOs and other stakeholders and made accessible for developmental purposes.

Challenges

✚ Tanzania has to address these and other issues, like the social and economic disparities, illiteracy, quality and standard, and the “digital divide”.

✚ In addition to some infrastructure requirements that are beyond the grasp of the Ministry, like sustainable power, roads, we find that, costs effective and affordable last mile solutions are to be achieved, and in Tanzania we still have a shortage of human skills in order to build capacity absorption to sustain our achievements. This is compounded by the lack of strategic frameworks in policies, curricula targeting entrepreneurship and innovation, and cost effective appropriate ict tools.

Conclusion

✚ Às we develop e-Skills in our country, we need to be creative, innovative and think out of the box, to solve problems which will lead to poverty alleviation and wealth creation.

✚ We will collaborate and work with any stakeholder on win-win basis to develop Tanzania. For example, we have just discovered gas, we lack the skills strategies, develop and deploy the extraction of this gas. Thus we welcome you to partner with us in a win-win manner, to alleviate poverty, create wealth and a knowledgeable society in Tanzania.



Let me end with our 50 years of independence slogan/theme, which was: ***We have tried, We are succeeding and We are moving forward!***

THANK YOU